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THE CITY OF EDMONTON

*Driver Training and Incentive
Programs Result in Fuel Economy
Success Story*

The City of Edmonton is combining driver training with a fuel-savings incentive program to encourage employees to improve their driving habits and reduce fuel consumption. The combination has proven to be a great success.

The City of Edmonton's fleet includes 350 cars/vans, 756 light-duty trucks and 227 heavy-duty trucks.



Driver Training Program

In 1982, the City of Edmonton Public Works Department introduced a Driver Energy Conservation Awareness Training (DECAT) Program in an effort to reduce fleet fuel consumption. The program was custom-designed to meet Edmonton's needs based on research of similar programs in other urban centres in Canada and the United States. The DECAT Program, which includes both classroom instruction and hands-on training, is available to all City of Edmonton departments that operate vehicles.

service

opportunity

In the classroom, instructors stress how vehicle operation, maintenance and selection, as well as driver attitude, can have a dramatic impact on fuel consumption. The drivers are then taken on a road test to provide a practical demonstration of how their driving habits can affect fuel economy.

During the on-road demonstration, the participant drives a computer-equipped training vehicle over an eight-kilometre test track of city streets. The first time around the track, the driver is instructed to drive as usual, and fuel consumption is measured by the on-board computer. On the second lap of the test track, a member of the Public Works training team coaches the driver on fuel-efficient driving techniques. The on-board computer provides a continuous estimate of the fuel being used, which enables the driver to see first-hand how different techniques can reduce fuel consumption.

According to city officials, the results of the on-road demonstration program have been outstanding, with the average driver recording a 20 per cent reduction in fuel consumption on the second lap of the test track. The difference in the length of time required to drive the two laps has proven to be insignificant.

Graduates of the DECAT Program receive a booklet of gas-saving tips, a pocket fuel-economy calculator and other appropriate handouts. The program encourages driver buy-in by reminding participants that proper driving habits will help them save money with their personal vehicles, as well as with the city's vehicles. For example, the handouts include fuel-efficient driving tips that can be applied on family vacations.



Fuel Savings Incentive Program

In 1992, the DECAT Program was supplemented by a new initiative — the City of Edmonton's Fuel Savings Incentive Program (FSIP). This program provides two levels of incentives, one for drivers and one for city departments.

Each year, the city's most fuel-efficient drivers are invited to compete in the DECAT division of the annual Civic Rodeo, where their accomplishments are publicly acknowledged at the closing banquet. Each city department is asked to nominate two employees for this recognition. Typically, the departments nominate the employee who has the best overall fuel consumption (relative to other vehicles in the same class) and the employee who has shown the most improvement in fuel consumption over the past year.

At the departmental level, departments that improve their fuel consumption compared to the previous year are rewarded with a rebate based on their contribution to the city's overall fuel



savings. Rebates to individual city departments have ranged from \$6,000 to \$60,000, and rebates to all departments since the program began have totalled approximately \$150,000. Over the course of the FSIP program, the city's fleet fuel consumption has improved by about five per cent, including fuel savings of 2.3 per cent between 1994 and 1995.

In support of the FSIP program, fuel consumption and odometer data are collected at the city's automated refuelling sites each time a vehicle is refuelled. For those vehicles that refuel at retail outlets, the data is recorded manually.

All city departments receive a quarterly report that details the fuel consumption of each vehicle. The report also indicates fuel consumption for the same quarter in the previous year, which allows drivers and departments to compare their performance under similar weather conditions. Averages for the entire city fleet are also provided.

The City of Edmonton supports the DECAT and FSIP programs in various ways. For example, at the request of individual departments, "Tailgate" presentations are arranged for employees. These informal presentations, often conducted in lunch rooms, instruct employees on what they can do to improve vehicle fuel consumption (this information is derived from Natural Resources Canada's Pro-Trucker driver education course). As well, news items about the programs and the accomplishments of individual employees and departments are published in the city's newsletter.

**For more information on
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ties, please write to**

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